Production cost of steel

1175. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the counry's largest steel producer, the State-owned Steel Authority of India Ltd., is finalising a plan to bring down its production cost;

(b) if so, whether the SAIL, which produces 11 million tonnes of steel over four plants spread across the country, is learnt to be working on a major cost reduction programme that would bring down the production cost by two per cent or by about Rs.250 per tonne; and

(c) if so, by when a final decision in this regard is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI BRAJ KISHORE TRIPATHY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) To further improve financial performance and cost competitiveness of SAIL, it has already drawn a cost reduction plan for 2002-03 so as to reduce the costs by over Rs. 250 per tonne on constant price basis.

VRS for SAIL's non-executives

1176. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that SAIL is embarking upon introducing an immature retirement scheme for non-executives, with a view to ease out a large chunk of employees; is so, why it is meant for non-executives only;

(b) how many workers have opted for VRS in SAIL for the last ten years;

(c) whether there have already exists a scheme for executives and hence, the present scheme is for non-executives only; and

(d) if so, how many executives have been immaturely retired in SAIL since inception?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI BRAJ KISHORE TRIPATHY): (a) and (c) SAIL is currently considering introduction of a premature retirement scheme for non-executives, as a scheme for premature retirement of executives is already in existence in SAIL.

(b) The total number of workers (non-executive) who have been granted VRS in SAIL in the last 10 years is as follows:

VR Scheme	No. of workers
VRS 2001	5,321
VRS 1999	11,606
VRS 1998	5,317
VRS (1.7.91-31.3.93)	3,910

(The VR Scheme was not in operation in the year 2000)

(d) The steel plants were set up around forty years back (in the late 50s and early 60s). Therefore, data on premature retirement since inception is not available.

Increasing steel production

†1177. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) the total quantity of steel produced in the country during the last three years;

(b) whether it is a fact that steel production has declined in comparision to its requirement;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the measures being taken to increase steel production?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI BRAJ KISHORE TRIPATHY): (a) The details of production of finished

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.